

**Minutes of Telford Town Deal Board**  
**Friday 04 November 12.00 - 12.45**  
**Held at Addenbrooke House**

**Attended:**

**Board Members**

<b>Graham Wynn OBE (GW)</b>	Chair
<b>Lucy Allan MP (LA)</b>	MP for Telford
<b>Cllr Lee Carter (LC)</b>	T&WC
<b>Janet Stephens (JS)</b>	Telford College
<b>Mandy Thorn MBE (MT)</b>	Marches LEP
<b>Ian Minton (IM)</b>	Sovereign Centros
<b>Will Westley (WW)</b>	Telford Business Board
<b>Julie Mellor (JM)</b>	Chief Officer Group (T&W Community & Voluntary Sector)
<b>Felicity Wingrove (FW)</b>	Zen Communications
<b>Claire Skidmore (CS)</b>	Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin (ST&W) CCG

**Observer**

**Alex Collins** BEIS

**Officers**

<b>David Sidaway (DS)</b>	T&WC
<b>Angie Astley (AA)</b>	T&WC
<b>Katherine Kynaston (KK)</b>	T&WC
<b>James Dunn (JD)</b>	T&WC
<b>Deb Byle (DB)</b>	T&WC
<b>Julie Wedge</b>	Minute taker

**1. Apologies**

**Actions**

Mark Pritchard MP  
Cllr Shaun Davies  
Paul Gascoine  
Maria Machancoses  
Graham Guest - Janet Stephens attended  
Guy Beaumont - Ian Minton attended

**2. Declarations of Interest**

No Declarations of interest. GW advised that new forms will be required and these will be sent out after the meeting.

**3. Notes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising**

Notes were agreed.

GW provided an update regarding Staffordshire University. Since the last meeting their board had met and decided they wanted to focus on in county projects so will not be taking forward involvement in Station Quarter.

GW advised that conversations were taking place with another potential partner.

#### 4. Programme Update

##### Oakengates

JD provided an update on the Oakengates Theatre Quarter. Focus is on improving the connectivity between Limes Walk/Market Street, removing physical and visible barriers, creating a new public square/events/markets space and improving the quality of the environment as a whole.

Scheme will introduce some residential at first floor and the retail offer will be reconfigured and shopfronts improved.

There are ongoing discussions taking place with businesses on a 1-1 basis and the aim is to retain each in Oakengates either within the scheme or utilising the existing buildings that are currently empty.

There has been a wide range of engagement including face to face, questionnaires; direct engagement with focus groups. A good level of feedback has been received.

GW raised about the scheme and the negative publicity. Where it is affecting businesses there doesn't seem to be balanced reporting from the press. GW asked if JD was able to share confidentially what has been offered to businesses to provide reassurance to the Board.

LA would also welcome this update as businesses have contacted herself and LA has agreed to meet.

JD advised that things are not yet finalised and all discussions are with the lease holder of the shop and therefore in a number of cases this is with the Head Offices rather than those on the ground. We have however encouraged Head Offices to speak to shop managers. All conversations have taken place on an individual basis and details not shared publically. The timing of the discussions with each tenant is at a different stage and some are reliant on other tenants making decisions on the size of their new shop.

There are less units in the new development but we are committed to support businesses and identify units that are more suitable, within Oakengates, where business wants this. Business could move to new premises or choose statutory compensation.

GW thanked JD for the update which provided the Board with a much more informed position. GW clarified that we are not talking about displacing businesses we want to retain them. GW was more than happy to support LA if she would be going to visit businesses. GW invited discussion in the light of the context JD had set out.

LC advised that support for businesses is also taking place outside of the Towns Funding with range of Council funded High Street Grants being used to support those affected by the redevelopment to take on new premises.

FW stated that she had also spoken with the wider businesses to get feedback and the general feeling is that it is all a tick box exercise to get government money. FW felt that there had been a lack of communication on why the changes were being done e.g. to increase footfall, bring benefits to businesses. We want Oakengates to thrive.

JM commented that Oakengates used to be vibrant and felt that the message needed to be shared that this is a chance to improve.

JD confirmed that the scheme will be delivered in phases, the plan is that businesses will only move once where possible. The planning application is due to be submitted today / Monday.

### **Station Quarter**

JD provided an update. There are 3 broad areas of the scheme,

- Ironmaster Way - a mixed use, high density urban corridor.
- A high density residential urban neighbourhood.
- Major new public gateway space and pedestrian crossing.

The new Digital Skills & Enterprise Hub will be a regional focal point for digital and business learning putting education in the centre of Telford.

There has been a wide range of consultation, including face to face consultation, meeting with local businesses and strategic stakeholders.

JD confirmed that hoarding is now in place and signage will start to be seen over the coming weeks. Enabling works contract has been awarded and site clearance and drainage diversion work has commenced

There are challenges in terms of costs and inflation is a major cost. Teams are working to make sure we are keeping cost down but this does remain a challenge.

GW advised that the council have put in additional funding but recognised that we are still c.£6m short. There are lots of creative ideas coming through and we have been to government for additional funding but this has been pushed back at this stage.

LA asked at what point does it become terminal? Is there a chance that we could lose an element? GW acknowledged that these were valid questions and we were looking at ways to bridge gap. LA commented that there is now another Levelling Up Secretary.

DS stated that the Council had hosted a visit with DLUHC Officers this week.

DS confirmed that we are having discussions with Willmott Dixon and the challenge will be over the next 2 - 3 months.

GW confirmed that he keeps in regular contact with the team. GW is also in contact with other Board Chairs and reassured the Board that we are in a better place than some and felt that there are likely to be some projects in other areas that will be terminally affected by the current crisis.

AA wanted to reassure all that we are currently travelling optimistically.

JS advised that the College were open to transferring the 6<sup>th</sup> Form provision to the Skills Hub.

GW expressed his confidence that the team are rising to the challenge.

5. The Board headed out for a visit to the Station Quarter and Wellington sites.

### **AOB**

MT advised all that today would be her last Town Deal Board Meeting as she was stepping down as Chair of the Marches LEP.

GW extended his thanks on behalf of the whole Board to MT for her contribution to the success of the Towns Fund proposals and delivery to date. He wished MT the best for her future

**Date of Next Meeting - TBC**

DRAFT